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ABSTRACT

The Reading Improvement Project in the Cleveland Public Schools, evaluated here, provides individualized instruction to pupils in grades 1-3 who are functioning at or below the 33rd percentile on the Stanford Diagnostic Comprehension subtest or the Metropolitan Readiness Test. The project supplements regular reading instruction by providing services to small groups of six or less for 45 minutes daily in the reading center of each school. The project also uses inservice programs for teachers, coordination with regular instruction or related reading programs and supportive work with parents. In the 1982-83 school year, the project attained all of its objectives. Project participants in all three grades showed mean gains of six to twenty Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) units on reading subtests, exceeding the pre-post criterion gains for NCE units. End-of-year performance levels among a significant proportion of 1982-83 participants were high enough to make them ineligible for continuation in the project. In addition, classroom teachers confirmed improvements in the reading skills and behavior of participants. Finally, teachers gave favorable ratings to the project service information they received. (CMG)

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READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

ECIA CHAPTER I

1982-83
EVALUATION REPORT

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DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

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UD023251

READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

1982-1983 Chapter 1 Evaluation Report

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The Reading Improvement Program is designed to help primary pupils identified to have reading problems. The program utilizes skills of reading consultants who provide individualized instruction to primary pupils (Grades 1-3) who are functioning at the 33rd percentile or below on Stanford Diagnostic Comprehension subtest or Metropolitan Readiness. It supplements regular reading instruction with program services provided to small groups of 6 or less for 45 minutes daily in the reading center of each school (N=48). The project's efforts towards individualization are supplemented by inservice programs, coordination with regular instruction or related reading programs, and supportive work with parents. Each Reading Instruction consultant serves approximately seven groups representing a maximum total of 42 students per day.

SERVICE SUMMARY

Pupils Served: 2,271 (2,075 Public, 196 Non-Public)

Grades Served: 1-3 Public, 1-8 Non-Public

Years in Operation: 17.5

Schools: 43 Public, 5 Non-Public, 48 Total (See Appendix A)

Staffing: 1 Program Coordinator, FT; 47 Consultant Teachers (46 Teachers, 1 Consultant); 1 Clerk, FT

Total Title 1 Expenditures: *

Per Pupil Cost: *

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Reading Improvement Project attained all of its 3 process and 3 product stated objectives, focused on helping primary pupils with reading problems. Program participants at grades 1-2 exceeded the pre-post criterion gains of four NCE units on CTBS Reading subtests. Participants at first grade showed pre-post mean NCE gains of 6.43; participants at the second grade evidenced pre-post gains of 17.02 and 14.10 NCE units for Sentence and Passage Comprehension subtests; participants at third grade showed pre-post gains of 20.75 and 13.61 NCE units for Vocabulary and Comprehension subtests. At second and third grades, the percent of participants functioning at or below 41 NCE units decreased by 32% to 45%, based on year-end reading performance, indicative of the percent of pupils to be exited from the project. Regular classroom teachers indicated that positive project effects were evident in pupils' improved reading skills and behavior towards reading. The teachers also gave a high rating to the project service information.

*Expenditure data was not available at the time of the preparation of this report.

OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOMES

- Objective 1a: Grade 1 participants who were provided project services for a minimum of 19 weeks will show mean pre-post gain of 4 NCE units at the end of the year on a standardized reading test.

  - Outcome: This objective was attained. The pre-post mean NCE gain of project participants (N=383) was 6.43, exceeding the specified 4 NCE criterion gains, based on performance on the CTBS Reading Comprehension subtest (B,S) in October, 1982 (pre-) and in April, 1983 (post). Observed gains were highly significant ($p<.01$) as noted below:

TABLE 1

PRE-POST MEAN NCE GAIN ON CTBS READING COMPREHENSION AT GRADE 1

Data	Mean NCE	Standard Deviation	t-Value
Pre	38.97	18.38	4.96 ($p<.0001$)
Post	45.40	18.22	
Gain	6.43	25.36	

Analysis of distribution of pre-post scores (Table 1) revealed that only 37% of the present group will qualify for continuing 1983-1984 project participation, if the present criterion for project eligibility is maintained. It should be noted that all participants for this project were functioning below 41 NCE on the selection instrument (Metropolitan Readiness, Harrison-Stroud Reading).

TABLE 2

LEVEL OF PRE-POST PERFORMANCE ON CTBS COMPREHENSION (B,S) AT GRADE 1 (N=667)

Level	Pre	Post	Change
41 NCE or Below	45%	37%	- 8%
42-50 NCE	26%	19%	- 7%
51 NCE or above	29%	44%	+15%

. Objective 1b: Grade 2 participants who were provided project services for a minimum of 19 weeks will show pre-post mean gain of 4 NCE units at the end of the year on a standardized reading test.

. Outcome: The objective was attained. Pre-post mean NCE gains were 17.02 for Sentence Comprehension and 14.70 for CTBS Passage Comprehension, exceeding the specified four NCE criterion gains. Observed gains were statistically significant beyond the .001 level as noted on Table 2.

TABLE 3

CORRELATED T-TESTS FOR PRE-POST MEAN NCE SCORES
ON CTBS READING (C,S) - GRADE 1

CTBS Subtest	N	NCE PRE-$\bar{X}$ (s.d.)	Post-$\bar{X}$ (s.d.)	Change	t-Value
Sentence Comprehension	672	27.42 (12.92)	44.44 (14.79)	17.02 (18.09)	24.38*
Passage Comprehension	667	28.86 (12.30)	43.56 (16.51)	14.70 (20.09)	18.90*

*P .001

Distribution of pre-post test scores revealed that only 39%-42%) of this percent group of participants will continue to qualify for 1983-84 participation (Table 4).

TABLE 4

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF PRE-POST NCE TEST SCORES
GRADE 2 ON CTBS READING (B)

Level of Performance	Sentence Comprehension			Passage Comprehension		
	Pre	Post	Change	Pre	Post	Change
41 NCE or Below	85%	39%	-46%	86%	42%	-44%
42-50 NCE	14%	29%	+15%	12%	29%	+17%
51 NCE or Above	1%	32%	+31%	2%	28%	+26%

Performance improved in all categories. Improvement was most evident in the 41 NCE or Below category, which demonstrated decreases of 46% (from 85% to 39% for Sentence Comprehension) and 44% (from 86% to 42% for Passage Comprehension).

. Objective 1c: Grade 3 participants who were provided project services for a minimum of 19 weeks will show pre-post mean gain of 4 NCE units at the end of the year on a standardized reading test.

. Outcome: This objective was attained. Pre-post mean NCE gains were estimated at 20.75 for CTBS Vocabulary and at 13.61 for CTBS Comprehension, exceeding the specified four NCE criterion gains. Observed gains were statistically significant beyond the .001 level as noted in Table 5.

TABLE 5

CORRELATED T-TESTS FOR PRE-POST MEAN NCE SCORES
ON CTBS READING (1,S) - Grade 3

CTBS Subtest	N	Pre-$\bar{X}$ (s.d.)	Post-$\bar{X}$ (s.d.)	Change	t-Value
Vocabulary	889	24.79 (13.62)	45.54 (17.52)	20.75 (20.51)	30.71*
Comprehension	882	26.11 (13.01)	40.23 (13.35)	14.61 (18.44)	21.92*

*$p<.001$

Analysis of the distribution of pre-post test scores revealed that about a half (55%) of the present group of participants will continue to qualify for 1983-84 project participation (Table 6).

TABLE 6

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF NCE PRE-POST TEST SCORES
ON CTBS READING - GRADE 3

Level of Performance	Vocabulary			Comprhenesion		
	Pre	Post	Change	Pre	Post	Change
41 NCE or Below	90%	45%	-45%	87%	55%	-32%
42-50 NCE	7%	22%	+15%	11%	22%	+11%
51 NCE or Above	3%	33%	+30	1%	23%	+22%

Improvement was evident in all three categories, with the greatest improvement noted for 41 NCE or Below for both Vocabulary and Comprehension subtests. Improvement for Vocabulary showed a decrease of 45% (from 90% to 45%). For Comprehension, a decrease of 32% (from 87% to 55%) was noted.

. Objective 2: A random sample of participants will receive an average rating of 3 or better, based on a five-point rating scale of improvement (5 as Marked Improvement to 1 as No Improvement) in basic reading skills completed by classroom teachers at the end of the school year.

. Outcome: Objective 2 was attained. End-of-the year ratings by classroom teachers on a five-point rating scale for a sample of 135 pupils indicated an average rating of 3.00 or better for each of nine identified reading skills, with the highest ratings observed for Recognizing Consonants (3.73) and Vowel sounds (3.64), and Pronouncing words (3.54)(refer to Appendix D).

. Objective 3: A random sample of program participants will receive an average rating of "3" or better (5 as Marked Improvement to 1 as No Improvement) based on a five-point rating scale of improvement in classroom teachers at the end of the school year.

. Outcome: Objective 3 was attained. End-of-the year ratings of classroom teachers for the same 135 youngsters in the sample revealed an average rating of 3.00 or better for six identified classroom behaviors as noted below (see Appendix D).

Classroom Behavior	Mean Ratings
Participation in reading group work	3.49
Completion of reading assignments	3.20
Confidence in ability to read	3.32
Independence in work habits	3.05
General attitude toward reading work	3.36
Attention span	3.01

. Objective 4: Project service information will be provided with an average rating of "3" or better, based on a five-point rating scale of usefulness (5 as Extremely Useful to 1 as Not Useful) by classroom teachers at the end of the school year.

. Outcome: Objective 4 was attained. Survey responses of a sample of classroom teachers rated the project service information, provided through a variety of techniques, to be useful. According to the project manager, provision of service information utilized different activities to provide information to the classroom teachers. Because of limited time classroom teachers were specially encouraged to visit the Chapter 1 teachers' classes during their planning time. However, only a third of the regular classroom teachers visited the classes of Chapter 1 teachers with about half unable to observe Chapter 1 classes. Regular teachers who observed Chapter 1 classes gave a mean rating of 3.76, based on a five-point rating scale of degree of Usefulness (5 as Extremely Useful to 1 as Not Useful at all). Other techniques that were utilized for communicating information included the following.

Technique	Mean Rating
Regulary scheduled conference	3.71
Informal conference	4.01
Checklist of skills requiring reinforcement, etc.	4.14

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

1. Distribution of test scores of first grade participants in Fall, 1982, and in Spring, 1982, reflected some improvement. The proportion of participants scoring at 41 NCE or below and at 42-50 NCE units decreased by 6% to 8% while those scoring at 51 NCE units or above increased by 6% (Appendix E).

2. Among participants at second and third grades, a dramatic increase in reading scores (ranging from 32 to 46 NCE units) indicates that a third of 1982-83 participants will be exited from the project, based on year-end reading performance (Table 3). The decrease in the proportion of participants functioning at 41 NCE or below contrasts with the consistent increase in participants functioning at 42-50 NCEs and at 51 NCE or above. There was a higher proportion or increase (ranging from 22% to 30%) noted for the 51 NCE or above, than those for the 42-50 NCE level (ranging from 11 to 15 NCE units).

3. Pre-test (Fall, 1982) performance showed that about 65% of the first graders, and 12% - 14% of the second and third graders were functioning above 41 NCE units. However, analysis of test data from the selection instrument revealed that all first grade participants and about 95% second - third grade grade participants were functioning below 41 NCE units.

4. The low correlations between reading subtest scores administered in Fall 1982 raises some questions about the test instrument. The following correlations are cited:

   - Correlations of .15 to .05 at grade 2 for Sentence and Passage Comprehension (CTBS Reading, Level C) subtests.
   - Correlations of .02 to .15 at grade 3 for Vocabulary and Comprehension subtests (CTBS Reading, Level 1).

5. Correlations between subtest (CTBS Passage and Sentence Comprehension) scores in Spring, 1982 were considerably higher than those between subtest scores (Vocabulary and Comprehension) in Fall, 1982.

6. Entry performance based on Fall, 1982 CTBS reading scores were generally 15-20 NCE units lower than the previous Spring 1982 CTBS performance (1982 Interim Evaluation Report).

7. Approximately 90% of participants initiated project participation during the first three months (September - October - November) of the 1982-83 school year.

CONCLUSIONS

The Reading Improvement Project was effective in helping primary pupils with reading problems. Program participants at first, second and third grades evidenced mean gains of six to twenty NCE units, exceeding the pre-post criterion gains of four NCE units. A significant proportion of 1982-83 participants are very likely to be exited from the Reading Improvement Project because end-of-year level of performance exceeds the eligibility criterion of 41 NCE (33rd %ile) or below. Eligibility figures were noted for the following grades: 37% at grade 1, 42% at grade 2 and 55% at grade 3. Improvement in participants reading skills and behavior towards reading were confirmed by classroom teachers. Project service information provided to the classroom teachers received favorable ratings from the teachers.

The following recommendations are offered:

- Continue the project;
- Emphasize project efforts at 2nd and 3rd grades;
- Continue inservice sessions;
- Continue parent involvement;
- Explore the reasons underlying the low correlations between subtest scores administered in the Fall, 1982.

APPENDIX A

LISTING OF SCHOOLS

1. Alfred A. Benesch
2. Almira
3. Anton Grdina
4. Bolton
5. Buckeye-Woodland
6. Captain A. Roth
7. Case
8. Charles Dickens
9. Charles H. Lake
10. Charles Orr
11. Chesterfield
12. Corlett
13. Denison
14. Dike
15. Douglas MacArthur
16. East Clark
17. East Madison
18. Giddings
19. Harvey Rice
20. Hazeldell
21. Hicks Montessori
22. Iowa-Maple
23. John W. Raper
24. Joseph Landis
25. Louis Agassiz
26. Louis Pasteur
27. Marion Seltzer
28. Marion Sterling
29. Miles
30. Miles Standish
31. Mound
32. Mt. Auburn
33. Paul Dunbar
34. Riverside
35. R.G. Jones
36. Scranton
37. Tremont
38. Valley View
39. Wade Park
40. Waverly
41. Willow
42. Wm. C. Bryant
43. Woodland Hills

NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. St. Aloysius
2. St. Jerome
3. St. Joseph Franciscan
4. St. Stanislaus
5. Urban Community

APPENDIX B

ENROLLMENT DATA READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Grade	At-Date	To-Date
1	321	405
2	647	790
3	855	1029
4	21	23
5	15	17
6	5	7
7	4	4
8	1	1
Total	1869	2276

APPENDIX C

LISTING OF INSERVICE WORKSHOPS 1982-1983

Date	Topic	Speaker(s)	No. in Attendance	Mean Ratings
09/08/82	Chapter 1	Dr. John Nairus Ms. P. Jenkins Compensatory Ed.	43	4.15 (AA)
10/05/82	Evaluation - Compensatory Education	Dr. O. Halasa (Research & Analysis) Ms. M. Johnson (Compensatory Ed.)		4.00 (AA)
11/02/82	Compentency Testing	Dr. M. Fleming & Dr. W. Green (Office of the Supt.)	48	4.20 (AA)
	Learning Styles	Project Staff		
12/15/82	Using the McGuire Bumpus Diagnostic Reading Test	Project Staff	46	4.19 (AA)
01/04/83	The Developmental Reading Program	Ms. Peggy Brown (Reading, English/Language Arts)	45	4.10 (AA)
02/01/83	Ready, Set, Read	Ms. Pat Dubray (Early Childhood Education)	36	3.86 (AA)
03/01/83	Management System using McGuire -Bumpus	Ms. Martha Dixson (Project Staff)	43	4.08 (AA)
	Project Plans 1983-1984	Ms. Rebecca Jefferson (Project Manager)		

(AA - Above Average)

(Continuation)

Date	Topic	Speaker(s)	No. in Attendance	Mean Ratings
04/19/83	Interpreting Competency Test Objectives	Ms. Rebecca Jefferson (Project Manager)	45	4.09 (AA)
	Matching Questions to Objectives			
05/19/83	Pupil Progress Report with Competency Objectives	Ms. Rebecca Jefferson (Project Manager)	42	4.02 (AA)
06/07/83	Clozure Techniques	Ms. Pat Kushner (Modern Curriculum Press)	44	4.15 (AA)
	Comprehension Item Question	Ms. Pauline Williamson (Project Staff)		

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES
READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

(N=135)

Gr.	1 = 45(33%)	14(10%)
	2 = 41(30%)	14(10%)
	3 = 48(36%)	25(19%)
	4 = 1(< 10%)	21(16%)

(29) PRESENT GRADE (30) GRADE IN SEPT. '83

Indicate the degree of improvement in the following skills of this pupil by marking the appropriate rating. Use the following rating system.

5 Marked Improvement — 4 — 3 Average Improvement — 2 — 1 No Improvement

If the skill is not applicable, mark 6 for not applicable.

	Reading Skill	Rating					$\bar{X}$
1	Recognizing consonant sounds	5	4	3	2	1	3.73
2	Recognizing vowel sounds	5	4	3	2	1	3.64
3	Pronouncing words at grade level	5	4	3	2	1	3.54
5	Reading orally without undue frustration	5	4	3	2	1	3.48
9	Finding main ideas	5	4	3	2	1	3.00
6	Following sequence	5	4	3	2	1	3.25
7	Getting meaning of words from context	5	4	3	2	1	3.20
8	Drawing conclusions from stated facts	5	4	3	2	1	3.15
4	Recognizing directly stated details	5	4	3	2	1	3.50

*Rank ordering with 1 as the highest value.

. Using the same rating system (p.1) indicate the degree of improvement in this child's observed classroom behavior:

	Classroom Behavior	Rating					$\bar{X}$
1	Participation in reading group work	5	4	3	2	1	3.49
4	Completion of reading assignments	5	4	3	2	1	3.20
3	Confidence in his ability to read	5	4	3	2	1	3.32
5	Independence in work habits	5	4	3	2	1	3.05
2	General attitude toward reading work	5	4	3	2	1	3.36
6	Attention span	5	4	3	2	1	3.01

. Was there some communication or coordination of efforts made with you by the project reading consultant about this child?

10(75%) YES 8(6%) NO 2(3%) DON'T KNOW 24(18%) NO RESPONSE

. If yes, mark the technique used by the project staff to coordinate these efforts with you: Mark all the items below that apply.

53(39%) Regularly scheduled conference

104(77%) Informal conference

29(22%) Observations of pupil in the Chapter 1 classroom

73(54%) Checklist of skills to reinforce etc.

— Others (Specify) _____

. Rate the degree of usefulness of these techniques that you checked above, using the following rating system.

5 Extremely Useful 4 3 Useful 2 1 Not useful at all

3	Regularly scheduled conference	5	4	3	2	1	3.71
2	Informal conference	5	4	3	2	1	4.01
4	Observations of pupil in the Chapter 1 classroom	5	4	3	2	1	3.53
1	Checklist of skills to reinforce etc.	5	4	3	2	1	4.14

— Other (Specify) _____

. Did you visit the Chapter 1 teacher's classroom to observe teaching techniques, strategies, ideas, etc. during your available time?

46(34%) YES **74(55%) NO** **15(11%) NO RESPONSE**

. If YES, approximately how many times? _____

Was (were these observations) this observation useful? (Circle one response only):

Comments _____

_____

_____

. Mark below, those recommendations to improve coordination efforts between you and the project consultant teacher. Mark any of the items that apply:

57(42%) – Coordination and communication of information is excellent; no need for change.

57(42%) – Continue to provide opportunities for classroom teachers to observe consultant at work with pupils.

80(59%) – Continue to provide a checklist on the pupils' strength and weaknesses on a regular basis.

36(27%) – Provide information about the pupils more frequently.

— – Other (indicate) _____

. Mark recommendations below that will improve project operations. Mark any of the recommendations below that apply:

21(16%) – The project is excellent; no change needed.

58(43%) – Strengthen coordination and communication with the regular reading program.

58(43%) – Strengthen parent involvement.

75(56%) – Expand project operations to include more children to be served.

66(49%) – Broaden criteria for project operations to include more children to be served.

21(16%) – Consider the provision of project services to pupils in their regular classrooms.

— – Other (identify) _____

APPENDIX E

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FALL (F '82) AND SPRING (S '83)
CTBS TEST SCORES IN NCE UNITS

Level of Performance	Grade 1		Grade 2				Grade 3			
	Comprehension		S*		P*		V*		C*	
	F '82	S '83	F '82	S '83	F '82	S '83	F '82	S '83	F '82	S '83
41 NCE or Below	45%	37%	85%	39%	86%	42%	90%	45%	87%	55%
42 - 50 NCE	26%	19%	14%	29%	12%	29%	7%	22%	11%	22%
51 NCE and Above	23%	44%	1%	32%	2%	28%	3%	33%	1%	23%
Range	1-74	1-81	1-66	—	1-70	1-75	1-81	1-99	1-65	1-85

*S - Sentence Comprehension, P - Passage Comprehension, V - Vocabulary, C - Comprehension